

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended) A gaming machine having a display means and a game control means arranged to control images displayed on the display means, the game control means being arranged to play a spinning reel game wherein at least one random event is caused to be displayed on the display means and, if a predefined winning event occurs, the machine awards a prize, wherein the improvement comprises the display means displaying a plurality of spinning reels, each reel carrying symbols from a set of symbols, one of the symbols of the set being a scatter symbol and, in respect of at least one of the reels, the set comprising a plurality of the scatter symbols, the positions of at least certain of the scatter symbols on said at least one reel being separated from each other on the reel by ~~at most~~ no more than one other symbol position so that, when more than ~~a minimum number of one~~ scatter symbols of the at least one reel ~~is~~ are displayed simultaneously with scatter symbols occurring on any of the other reels at any one time when the reels are in a rest condition, all the displayed scatter symbols contribute to a single paying combination of the scatter symbols.

Claim 2 (original) The gaming machine of claim 1 in which the display means is a video display unit and the display of the reels is constituted by a video simulation of spinning reels.

Claim 3 (original) The gaming machine of claim 1 in which the set of symbols on each of the reels has more than one occurrence of the scatter symbol.

Claim 4 (original) The gaming machine of claim 3 in which the set of symbols of each reel has at least two scatter symbols.

Claim 5 (original) The gaming machine of claim 3 in which the scatter symbols are positioned on each reel such that up to three scatter symbols are able to be displayed together at any one time.

Claim 6 (new) A gaming machine having a display means and a game control means arranged to control images displayed on the display means, the game control means being arranged to play a spinning reel game wherein at least one random event is caused to be displayed on the display means and, if a predefined winning event occurs, the machine awards a prize, wherein the improvement comprises the display means displaying a plurality of spinning reels, each reel carrying symbols from a set of symbols, one of the symbols of the set being a special symbol and, in respect of at least one of the reels, the set comprising a plurality of the special symbols, the positions of at least certain of the special symbols on said at least one reel being separated from each other on the reel by no more than one other symbol position so that, when more than one of the special symbols of the at least one reel are displayed simultaneously with special symbols on any of the other reels when the reels are in a rest condition, all the displayed special symbols contribute to a single paying combination of the special symbols.

Claim 7 (new) The gaming machine of claim 6 in which there are more special symbols able to be displayed than there are reels constituting the spinning reel game.

Claim 8 (new) A gaming machine having a display and a game controller arranged to control images displayed on the display, the game controller being arranged to play a game wherein at least one random event is caused to be displayed on the display and, if a predefined winning event occurs, the machine awards a prize, wherein the improvement comprises the display displaying a plurality of columns of symbols, the symbols being selected from a predetermined set of symbols, and, in respect of at least certain symbols of the set, it being possible to obtain a winning combination made up of a greater number of said certain symbols than there are columns displayed on the display.